

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 995
By Armstrong

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz upon receiving the 2004 National Conference for Community and Justice Humanitarian Award.

WHEREAS, the Tennessee General Assembly is proud to specially recognize and honor those inspirational pastors who, through their leadership and guidance, faithfully serve God, their congregations, and their communities; and

WHEREAS, the Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz, Bishop of the Diocese of Knoxville, is one such exemplary religious leader; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Kurtz has dedicated himself to the pursuit of bettering the lives of his fellow human beings, ministering to the needs of the less fortunate, and spreading the word of God; and

WHEREAS, for his devoted service to the Knoxville community, Bishop Kurtz received special recognition at the 51st annual National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) Humanitarian Awards dinner on February 26th, when he was presented with the 2004 Humanitarian Award; and

WHEREAS, in 1927, the NCCJ was organized to fight bias, bigotry, and racism; this year, the organization honored three estimable public servants, including the Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz, who have dedicated themselves to combating these evils; and

WHEREAS, appointed by Pope John Paul II on October 20, 1999, Bishop Kurtz became the second bishop of the Diocese of Knoxville; and

WHEREAS, prior to this appointment, Bishop Kurtz dutifully served the Diocese of Allentown for 27 years; he served on more than a dozen boards while in Pennsylvania, including service as Diocesan Director of Catholic Charities, Diocesan Coordinator for Health Affairs,

Executive Director of the Catholic Social Agency and Family Life Bureau, Executive Director of the Social Action Bureau, and participating in many other organizations; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Kurtz continued his life of dedicated service following his move to Knoxville, where he is a member of the Association of Christian Denominational Leaders and was selected for membership into Leadership Knoxville in 2002; and

WHEREAS, a prominent ecclesiastic nationwide, Bishop Kurtz serves on three important committees for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; those committees include the Committee for Pro Life, the Committee for Marriage and the Family, and the Committee for Priestly Life and Ministry; and

WHEREAS, respected and admired by members of all faiths, Bishop Kurtz enjoys the esteem of his fellow religious leaders and laypersons who testify that Bishop Kurtz is a knowledgeable ecclesiastical leader and a warm, kind, and friendly member of the Knoxville community; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud the Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz on his many contributions to the good people of East Tennessee, his unwavering commitment to his ministry and faith, and his astute leadership in the Diocese of Knoxville; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we commend and thank the Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz for his honorable and meritorious service to the State of Tennessee and the good people of Knoxville, congratulate him on his receipt of the 2004 National Conference for Community and Justice Humanitarian Award, and extend to him our best wishes for success in every future endeavor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.